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The Spectator

Thursday, December 9, 2021

Volume LXIII
Number XIII

Publishing the Truth, From Good Motives and For Justifiable Ends

Community calls for better health services

by Anoushka Aswin '25
STAFF WRITER

Students and parents recently brought increased attention to the issues with the health services provided at Hamilton College. Members of the Hamilton community started a petition to "Improve the Care given by the Health Center at Hamilton College." The petition reached 101 signatures, demonstrating widespread support for concerns over Hamilton healthcare.

The petition, started by a parent of a Hamilton senior, describes the services at the Health Center as "substandard," saying the center provides "poor care and advice."

"The Health Center should provide care that does not require a visit to the ER or a visit to a specialist," the petition states, "the lack of basic services to cover minor ailments and at times the lack of a timely response seems to be universally experienced by the student body." These claims share similar concerns with the student body, as many students find that the Health Center lacks direct support for their care. Many students have struggled to get timely appointments, been refused adequate resources, or been referred to the local hospital's emergency room as a final solution.

On Dec. 1, Interim Dean of Students Nancy Thompson sent an email to the Hamilton community attempting to bring light to the healthcare situation. In response to the unrest over the lack of proper health care and services, Thompson cited a staff shortage as the main reason for the issues: "This fall our Physician Assistant Director has been the lone clinician who can diagnose and prescribe. We normally have two providers, in addition to the doctor who is with us one day a week. This shortage of staff has forced us to utilize local urgent care facilities to a greater extent than we prefer."

Barbara Fluty, the Physician Assistant and Director at the Health Center, commented on the issue saying, "My staff and I have had more medical appointments for the fall of 2021 compared to fall 2020." Fluty feels the effects of the staff shortage as well, remarking "On some days I feel it would be helpful to have a clone army so I can accomplish more but it simply is not the reality of the situation."

While acknowledging the validity of the claims made by students, Thompson informed the community of actions the college is taking to improve health services. Hamilton is participating in an ongoing effort to hire additional staff members to the Health Center—a nurse practitioner, a physician assistant and a registered nurse. According to Thompson, it is believed that the new staff "will greatly improve our ability to see students in a timely manner. It will also enable us to offer additional hours of service." Students are also told that they will see "significant improvements" in appointment availability.

Fluty reveals that "[they] have not had much luck" in finding more medical providers and that the college has been actively looking since the summer. She says that "[Clinton] has seen a shortage of medical personnel. But we are hopeful that we will have at least one new provider in place for the spring semester."

However, no concrete date for these new hires has been released, and it is still unclear to the community when positive changes will be seen in their care. The petition for improved healthcare offers its own potential solutions, calling for an expansion of hours and advancement of the services provided by the Health Center. The center is only open on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Both the hours and the days open are an area of contention for many students who feel they may need access to care outside of these times due to conflicts with their class schedule. As students hold out for longer hours, the college maintains the current system of the Fonemed program, which takes urgent and non-urgent calls after Health Center hours. The goal of the calls are to "help direct students to off-campus medical resources," which demonstrates the college's continued reliance on resources not available on campus.

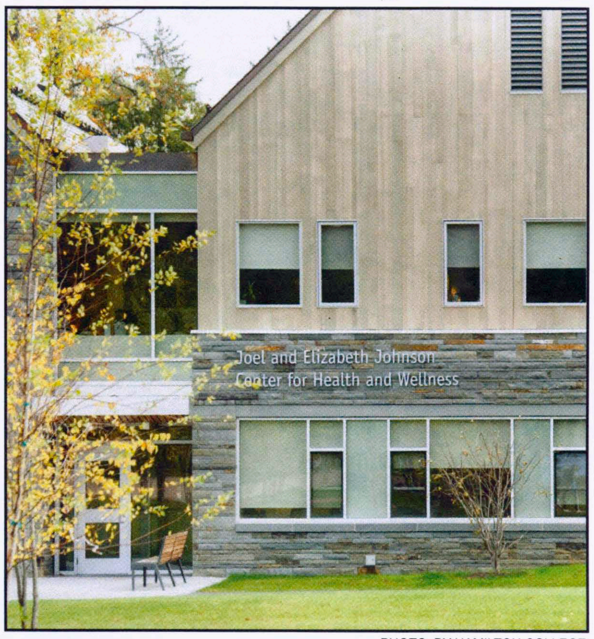

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

The Health Center is facing a staff shortage, leading to a shortage of student appointments.

Furthermore, the petition asks if the college could "hire a general practitioner either full time or a set number of hours each week where students can make appointments for a basic consultation and advice." Supporters of this petition allude to a system that functions similar to that of a doctor's office in the hopes that this may be more beneficial to students. It appears that the Hamilton community desires more solutions than a simple addition of staff to the center, which may not be able to fix the multitudes of problems students face.

Fluty is hopeful for the future of the Health Center, stating, "I am proud of the services that we provide to students. With the addition of two more providers, we can improve our availability. I am also excited about future collaboration with the Health Promotions person next semester. We will have the opportunity to provide students important information and hopefully fresh programming that will be helpful to students."

Through the developing controversy over the care provided by the Health Center, it is clear that students and parents expect comprehensive reform from the college so that students can get the healthcare they deserve. Whether or not the college will be able to live up to these expectations is still to be determined.

The Chapel reopens after major renovations

by Alex Merkowitz '25
STAFF WRITER

After almost a full year without the historic and iconic Chapel, the scaffolding that was on the Chapel during the renovations has been removed, and students are now free to enter the building.

The historic college Chapel, built in 1827, was one of the first buildings on campus, reopened on Nov. 18 after a renovation period that had been going on since Mar. The building closed down to all members of the college community during the renovations, even those who usually work in the building. Services were temporarily being held in the Events Barn and Bristol Center, so the reopening of the chapel provides a central building for religious activities. Religious services, as well as Meditation Club and some performances, have now returned to the chapel.

The main changes in the renovations were to the steeple of the chapel, which is often used as a symbol of the College. These improvements are designed to preserve the aging chapel, along with the history behind it. Prior to the renovations, the wooden frame that held up the steeple was rotten and in poor condition. According to the College website, several color changes were made to the chapel as well, as "the formerly all-white steeple now has accents of gray and green, and the dome and the quill weathervane have gone from a bright new-penny copper to a shade of gold." Several lights were also added in various parts of the chapel. Mesick Cohen Wilson Baker Architects conducted the renovations, wit a total cost of $3.1 million.

Charlie Haberstock '25 said that he looks forward to spending time in the chapel now that the renovations are finished.

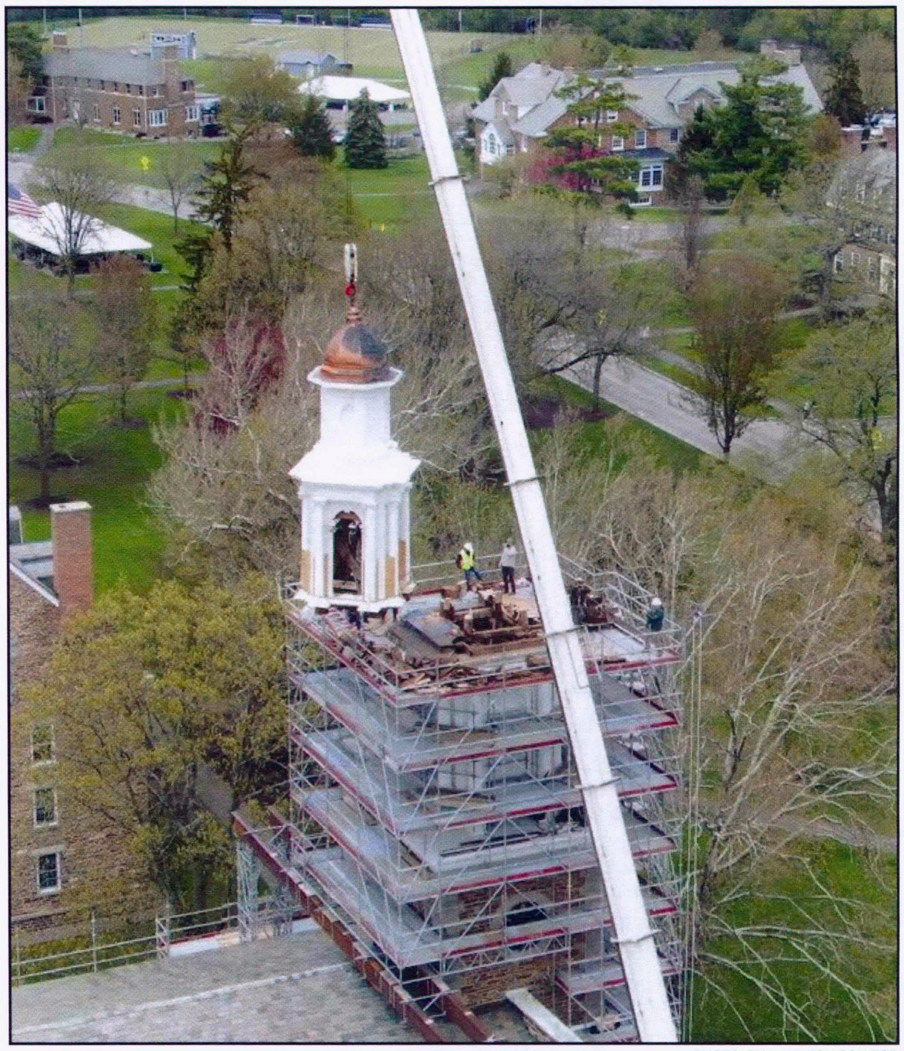

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

Students saw the old steeple of the Chapel removed amidst construction for heavy-duty restoration work earlier this semester.

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

The Chapel, complete with a refurbished steeple, shines over campus.

"The chapel is really just a great space. It's very peaceful, there's a lot of comfy seating and it's a very special place to be on campus," he said.

College chaplain Rev. Jeffrey McArn said that while the chapel was historically associated with Christianity, more recently it has become a place that all members of the College community can enjoy, regardless of religious affiliation. He added that due to its housing of Jewish, Muslim and Christian religious offices, as well as other spiritual activities, the chapel is a special place on campus."We try to make it an open space that can absorb different religious moments and experiences," he said.

The versatility of the building is another aspect that makes it unique. The building's first floor hosts religious services and events and the third floor is used as a study and meditation space.

"The space downstairs of course can seat a lot of people but it can also host an intimate gathering. Up on the third floor we really tried to make it seem like a home environment, the library, the couches, a kitchen make it a place to study and or just to be between classes," McArn said.

While the steeple of the chapel was restored, minimal changes were made to the interior of the building. McArn hopes that in the future, the College adds elevators to the building in order to make the upper levels of the building more accessible for all students.

Haberstock said that he plans to study on the quiet third floor of the building, and many other students already do. These restorations of the Chapel ensures that the space is available for students to use now and in the future.

COVID-19 rates on the rise in Oneida County

by Miko Newman '24
STAFF WRITER

As winter approaches, Oneida County faces rising COVID-19 cases. The county reported over 1,200 new virus cases and 13 related deaths from Nov. 24 through Dec. 1, bringing the county's overall total to almost 34,000 cases. Furthermore, 89 Oneida County residents were hospitalized, and of that number, 62 were unvaccinated.

In response to this surge, Oneida County officials decided to modify their prevention efforts away from the unvaccinated population and to those who are already vaccinated. "We can't keep chasing a group that's not gonna comply. I really think we've gotta focus now where we can make an improvement," said Oneida County Executive Anthony Picente, Jr. in a statement, according to the Observer-Dispatch.

Roughly 70% of the county is vaccinated and 29,000 booster shots have wbeen administered. However, there are still 60,000 eligible residents who have yet to receive one. These individuals will get a text or email this week with a reminder to get the booster.

Additionally, Oneida County created Boost OC, a vaccination incentive program that provides $100 e-gift cards that can be spent in local Oneida County businesses or organizations to any resident who is vaccinated or received a booster shot on or after July 15, 2021. Children under 18 are also eligible, with their e-gift cards made available to their parents or legal guardian. Residents do not have to do anything to receive the electronic gift card. Texts or emails are sent out through the organization Prizeout with instructions on how to redeem the e-gift card through their app.

The federal government continues to support Oneida County's fight against the pandemic. On Dec. 1, U.S. Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer and U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand announced $1,377,409 for Oneida County from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to cover costs associated with the county's COVID-19 response. The funds provide reimbursement for expenses related to the purchase and distribution of medical supplies and materials (including PPEs), enhanced cleaning/disinfecting facilities, dissemination of information to the public and guidance regarding COVID-19, HVAC systems and other components of combating the spread of the virus.

The new 8.7% positivity rate threatens the health and wellbeing of the county's residents, yet booster shots are a key component to protecting the community Picente asserted, "I think if we can step up and get the boosters to this population over the next couple of months, I think you'll see that number of vaccinated cases go down dramatically."

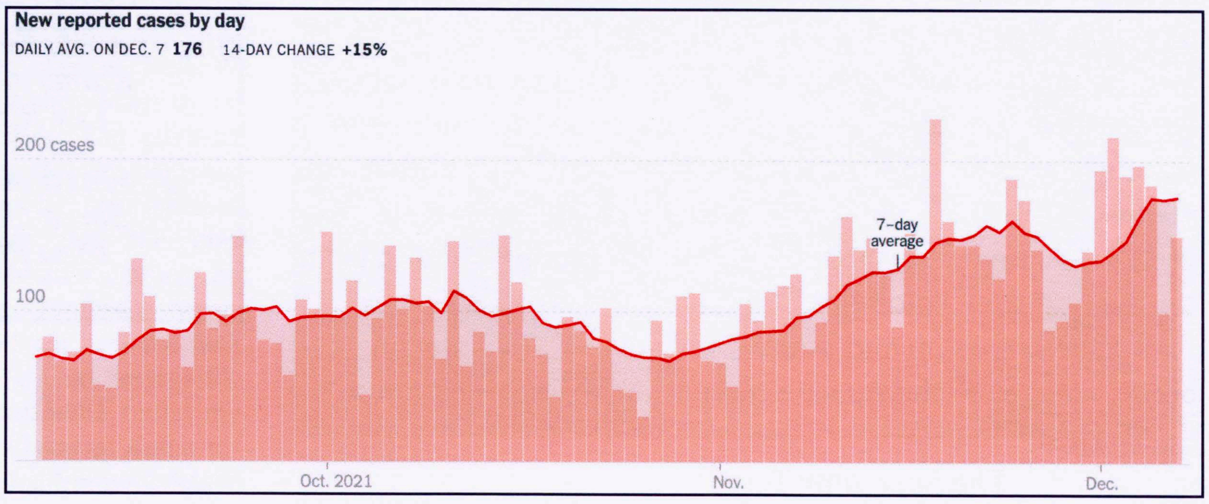

PHOTO BY THE NEW YORK TIMES

COVID-19 cases in Oneida County display a recent volatility of which the College has taken note. They show a steady upward trend, increasing by 15% in the last two weeks.

Campus Safety Incident Report

In an effort to respect discretion, *The Spectator* and Campus Safety have not disclosed the idenities of the students involved in these reports.

Thurs., Dec. 2

4:31 a.m. Trouble Alarm -- Carnegie Residence Hall

1:03 p.m. Medical Emergency -- Woollcott House

Fri., Dec. 3

12:22 a.m. Area Check -- Griffin Road

Sat., Dec. 4

12:02 a.m. Noise Complaint -- Kirner-Johnson Building

12:34 a.m. Medical Emergency -- Dunham Residence Hall

1:00 a.m. Medical Emergency -- North Residence Hall

9:32 p.m. Assist -- Bundy West Residence Hall

Sun., Dec. 5

12:13 a.m. Concern For Welfare -- Ferguson House

5:08 p.m. Concern For Welfare -- Bundy West Residence Hall

5:45 p.m. Motorist Assist -- South Campus

Mon., Dec. 6

11:48 a.m. Parking Complaint -- Morris House

3:27 p.m. Area Check -- On Campus

8:29 p.m. Trouble Alarm -- Commons Dining Facility

10:44 p.m. Medical Emergency -- North Residence Hall

10:47 p.m. Medical Emergency -- Milbank Residence Hall

Dear members of the Hamilton Community,

We hope you are all well and that you are finding some peace and rest amongst the stress of finals.

Unfortunately, Cole will be stepping away from the Editor-in-Chief position next semester to study abroad in Italy. While we will miss the passion, talent and hard work that he brings to *The Spectator*, we wish him best of luck on his next adventure, and look forward to his return to the paper in Fall 2022.

At this time, we would also like to welcome Eric Moss '24 as our newest Co Editor-in-Chief. Eric previously served the paper as a Staff Writer and most recently as a Co-News Editor. As we can all attest, not only is Eric a fantastic writer, editor and student, but his warmth, kindness and leadership makes him a fantastic person to serve in this new capacity. We hope that the rest of the community will join us in welcoming Eric to the EIC team!

Finally, thank you to every Hamilton student, faculty member, employee, administrator, parent and alum who has supported us through out this semester. This publication means so much to each and every one of us, and we are so grateful that we were able to operate both online and in print for the first time since Spring 2020.

We hope you and your families have a wonderful break, and we wish you safe travels as you leave campus.

Best,

The Spectator Team

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Cole Kuczek

Editor-Emeritus
Claire Goldstein

Managing Editors
Claire Goldstein
Catherine McFarland

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The Spectator's Letter to the Editor section is designed to be a forum for the entire Hamilton community to discuss and debate campus, local, national, and global issues. Pieces published in the section express the opinion of the individual writers and are not necessarily the opinions of *The Spectator*, its editors or the Media Board.

Letters to the Editor are welcome from all students, alumni/ae, faculty, friends of the college, and Hamilton community members.

The Spectator has the following policies for submission:

1. Submissions are due by 10:00 p.m. on the Monday before publication. The editors reserve the right to refuse any late submissions.
2. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. The editors reserve the right to cut off letters at 500 words.
3. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed.
4. *The Spectator* reserves the right not to publish any letter it deems inappropriate for publication.
5. If a piece is determined to be libelous, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, or an unnecessary and/or unwarranted ad hominem or personal attack, it will not be published.

The Spectator

is looking for social media editors, web editors and individuals who want to distribute the paper to join our staff!

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spec.hamilton.edu

Celebrating 173 years, we were first published as The Radiator *in 1848.*

About Us

The Hamilton College Spectator, *publication number USPS 612-840, is published weekly by the Hamilton College Student Media Board while classes are in session. For more information e-mail spec@hamilton.edu. Our offices are located on the second floor of the Sadove Student Center. The deadline for advertisements is Monday the week of publication. For further information, please e-mail specads@hamilton.edu.*

"That's Hot:" Blind Eyes Design, The Roll Collab, Upcurl spark campus apparel trends

by Emma Mae Regan '22
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Picture this: you and your friends are about to sit down for lunch at Commons when BAM! You notice a student walk by wearing the trendiest patchwork jean jacket you have ever seen. Another student sits in the corner of the cafeteria, laughing with friends as they rock a t-shirt with the words "ROLL CONTS" across the chest. As you are about to grab a to-go coffee, a third student in custom Levis 514 snake denim sashays past you to grab a lid. You wonder to yourself "where is everyone getting these clothes from?" Enter Blind Eyes Design, The Roll Collab and Upcurl, three student-created and run fashion brands that are taking the Hamilton community by storm. *The Spectator* sat down with the creators of each brand to talk about their journeys, current projects and the futures of their companies.

UPCURL

Instagram: @upcurl_

According to co-founder Sammy Johnson '20, Upcurl was born out of a class that Johnson and co-founder Chad Varney '22 took in Spring 2020. "I was a senior and I really wanted to take a class that I created myself and was really passionate about. I started thinking about taking a course that had to do with making clothes, and Chad is an art major, so he was really interested in the class as well. We proposed it to a bunch of different people and got shot down by everyone…but finally, after talking with the Registrar and advisors, we were sent in [Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies] Aaron Strong's direction and he was pumped up about it," said Johnson.

Originally, Johnson and Varney thought that the class would culminate with a fashion show of the student's clothes, but then COVID-19 hit. "When we got sent home, Professor Strong asked us what we wanted to do because we could not host the fashion show anymore. Chad was really into digital arts, so he was like "Why don't we make a website?" From there, we made social media accounts for the brand, started following students on those different accounts and came up with a brand name," said Johnson.

Varney and Johnson noted that Upcurl's mission of environmental consciousness came from the creators' own interests and suggestions from Professor Strong. For example, Professor Strong connected a friend who made upcycled tote bags with Johnson and Varney, and that friend showed the two how they made their products and represented themselves on social media.

Upcurl's creators eventually decided that their products' designs would embody east coast surf culture, and that they would produce those clothes using upcycling and reworking. According to Varney, upcycling is the repurposing of clothing, which Varney and Johnson achieve at Upcurl through purchasing clothes from thrift stores and reworking them to fit modern fashion trends.

PHOTO BY UPCURL

PHOTO BY UPCURL

Today, Johnson is in charge of making Upcurl's clothes with her sewing and embroidery machines in Boston, while Varney is in charge of the website and social media aspects of the brand. Although the distance between the creators can be challenging on release dates, Johnson and Varney have found that their remote operations have worked well for the most part.

Johnson and Varney are excited to announce that they will be launching a range of six hoodies, eight beanies, sweatsuits, shirts and jackets in the near future. This line differs from previous launches because there will be multiples of each item. "A problem that we have had in the past is that our products have all been one of a kind, but many people have wanted the same one," said Varney.

In order to uphold their commitment to sustainability, each product will be custom- rather than bulk-ordered. Although this method will make shipping slower compared to previous products, Johnson and Varney found through research that this was the most sustainable and feasible way for the two to make multiples of each product. The co-creators are also excited about a new line of patches that Varney designed for Upcurl. In the future, Johnson and Varney are hoping to bring on an employee that is well-versed in the finances of small businesses, since neither of them have a financial background.

Additionally, Varney hopes to kickstart his career or attend design school after graduation. Since Johnson is located in Boston, Varney hopes that he will move there post-Hamilton so that the two can work on the brand for at least a few years in person. Both Varney and Johsnon are grateful for the support and platform that the Hamilton community has given them.

"We started at Hamilton and they are some of our biggest supporters, so we're really thankful that people and the school have our back," said Johnson. "On behalf of me and Sammy, I just want to say thank you to everyone for the support, because we would have stopped a long time ago if there was not any...Something we want to focus on is having a positive impact on the world. We not only want to be an influencer of culture and fashion, but we want to change the way that people look at buying clothing," said Varney.

BLIND EYES DESIGN

Instagram: @blindeyesdesign

For Blind Eyes Design co-founders Rufus Somerby '22 and Graham Nielsen '22, a series of coincidences not only fostered a friendship, but a business venture. The two initially met on their first-year orientation trip, and later discovered they had a mutual love for squash, art, music and culture. After becoming friends, Somerby and Nielsen decided they wanted to explore their shared interests in a business setting.

"During our sophomore year, we lived next to each other in Bundy, so we set up a really small space, like the whole wall of my room was just covered in print outs of designs and images that we thought were cool. We then decided "fuck it, let's try to make something," said Nielsen.

After the two made that decision, Somerby added that "we bought some Uniqlo shirts and printed on them. While COVID-19 hit right as we were getting into the swing of things, it ended up being a positive because it gave us some more time to flesh out our ideas, get the website going, get the LLC and put together a business plan."

Nielsen and Somerby had different sources of inspiration for their ideas for Blind Eyes Design. In addition to his love for music and culture, Nielsen, the self-proclaimed "Creative Director" of Blind Eyes Design, also finds inspiration for the brand from social media, his travels and his previous work experiences.

When Nielsen studied abroad in Sweden, he visited the Artipelag, a contemporary cultural center located in Gustavsberg, Sweden. "The Artipelag had this Fornasetti exhibit where there were all of these face prints, and I thought that concept was so cool, so I took a bunch of photos and sent them to Rufus," said Nielsen.

Additionally, Nielsen took a semester off last year, during which he worked at Swedish fashion houses Acne Studios and Eytys.

"I learned about many aspects of the fashion business from those internships, which has been super helpful for Blind Eyes Design. For example, at Eytys, I handled all of their Instagram content during all of my internship, so I got to see the behind the scenes of the company," said Nielsen.

Today, Nielsen finds inspiration for Blind Eyes Design through deep dives on Instagram and sending photos, videos and quotes of places that he finds interesting to Somerby. He is also in charge of designing and managing the website, social media and advertisements.

Somerby, the self-proclaimed "Artist" of Blind Eyes Design, is in charge of the financial and artistic elements of the company. Somerby's love for visual art stemmed from his hometown and high school experiences.

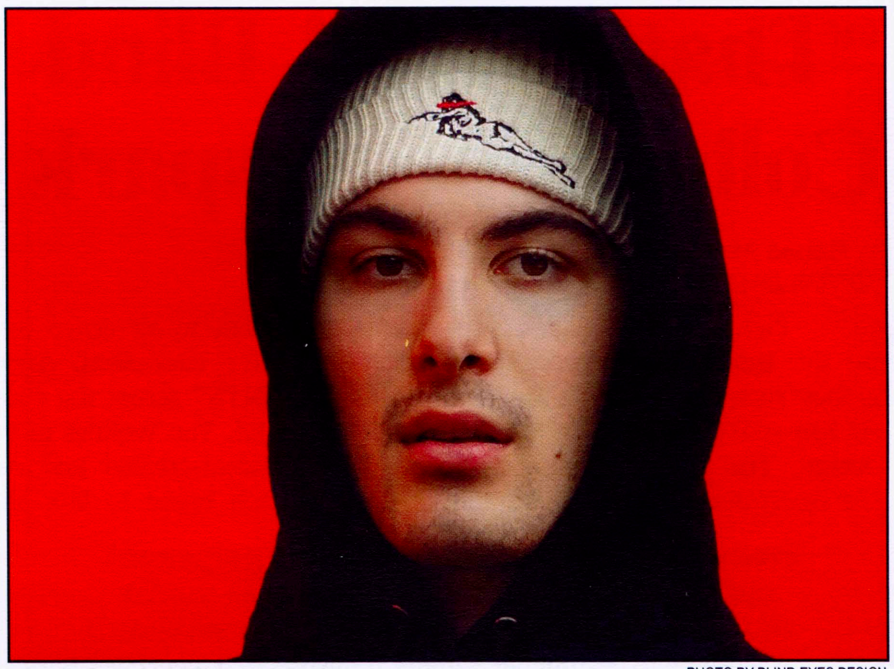

PHOTO BY BLIND EYES DESIGN

PHOTO BY BLIND EYES DESIGN

"I took art classes in high school and grew up in New York City, so I was surrounded by many influences. My senior thesis in high school dealt a lot with my art and censorship, which I showed through blocking out certain parts, painting over that and pulling off tape. That project sparked a lot of our initial ideas [for Blind Eyes Design]," said Somerby. Today, Somerby spends hours working on sketches that he submits to Nielsen for feedback and approval.

So far, the biggest challenges for the two have been the speed of production and price of their products. Blind Eyes Design produces limited-run garments that contain elements of "streetwear, art brut and high fashion." However, this approach means that no two articles of clothing are alike, and that it takes longer for Nielsen and Somerby to produce an article of clothing because it is custom made rather than bulk-ordered.

"Since we are not buying wholesale (both for creative and financial reasons), that makes the prices of our products shoot way up," said Nielsen.

However, the co-founders are excited because they have two big projects coming up. First, Somerby created a line of approximately a dozen Western designs that can be embroidered on t-shirts and a crewneck. The two bought a embroidery machine and learned how to both use the machine and turn vector files into embroidery files so that they can make the products themselves.

"We wanted to try a new medium since we have primarily done printing in the past, so embroidery is new for us. We are also excited that this project will have a customizable aspect to it. For the Western launch, people will be able to go on the website and customize a t-shirt using colors and the Western designs" said Nielsen. The two are aiming to finish their prototypes before break, and hope to release the products after the Spring 2022 semester starts.

Second, the two will do a big social media push over break of their customizable Levis 514 denim. Although the product already exists on their website, this will be the first time that the jeans will be heavily promoted on the brand's social media. At the end of the day, Nielsen and Somerby want to promote Blind Eyes Design as a team art studio, with their clothes being the studio's "merch."

"[Blind Eyes Design] is a conglomeration of all of our interests, and we just like putting that out into the world and seeing people enjoy and wear our work," said Somerby.Both are grateful for the lessons and experiences they have had out of the brand.

"Neither of us had experience with a clothing brand at all [before Blind Eyes Design], and I know it's cliche, but if you have an idea, then you should try it… I've learned so much from the brand, and now that I'm starting a job search in the creative services, I already know so much more about what I want to do and what running a business looks like [from Blind Eyes Design]... Hamilton loves to say that they're not a business school, but our brand shows that there are ways to still have business experiences here," said Nielsen.

THE ROLL COLLAB

Instagram: @therollcollab

The Roll Collab started with the "Roll Conts" t-shirt that owner and co-founder Kelcie Zarle '22 originally made for herself and her teammates during the 2019-2020 school year.

"Over the Summer of 2020, I took a picture of myself wearing the shirt, holding a sign that said something like 'I want to go back to college' on it. After I posted that on my social media, NESCAC Barstool ended up sharing the photo on their Instagram, and someone from Alpha Theta Chi (ATX) reached out about collaborating on a COVID-19 fundraiser using my shirt design. Through Custom Ink, ATX and Women's Basketball sold the t-shirts and raised $4,160," said Zarle. The two groups donated the funds to the Foothills Rural Community Ministry Food Pantry in Rome, NY.

After seeing students wear the "Roll Conts" t-shirt around campus the following semester, Zarle was inspired to turn the t-shirt into a bigger project. Zarle developed The Roll Collab through a two-semester independent study with Professor of Art Laurie (Ella) Gant. Zarle credits Professor Gant with teaching her many skills that helped with the creation, design and production aspects of the brand. "I wouldn't have been able to accomplish anything without her," said Zarle.

In addition to the independent study, Zarle also has a social media and brand management background. She has had media, marketing and analytics experience as an intern at CoachUp and Hamilton College, and today, Zarle serves as the Social Media Coordinator for Moolah Kicks, which is the first female basketball brand that is "for female basketball players, by female basketball players." Zarle enjoyed the internships because she loved engaging with followers, learning more about Adobe Photoshop and following her passions.

Eventually, Zarle applied her experiences from the independent study and her internships to The Roll Collab. According to Zarle, the brand has become known for its "comfortable screen printed apparel with original designs that can be worn by anyone in any setting, [whether it be] in class, to sleep, for workouts, or to a party!"

Since Zarle is running The Roll Collab by herself, it takes many steps and a lot of time for a product to go from conception to distribution. According to Zarle, the process includes 1) creating a design, 2) posting it on Instagram for customer orders and feedback 3) ordering supplies (primarily from Amazon), 4), printing out all of the designs onto transfer paper, 5) pressing the transfer paper designs onto the clothing using her personal heat press and 6) distributing the products via Hamilton mailboxes. Although the design and social media aspects of the process come naturally to Zarle, the production of the clothes was a learning curve.

"There were definitely some mess ups–some of the apparel turned out differently in physical form than I had expected them to look after drafting it up digitally. If I heat pressed something for too long, designs would melt and bleed into the clothing, but if I pressed them too short, designs wouldn't stick on the shirt and I would have to throw that piece out and try again. Once I got the hang of it, however, it was very simple! I think the same logic applies for everything in business: once you get the hang of it, it is pretty manageable to do – especially on top of school work, internships and basketball," said Zarle.

Zarle recently collaborated with Dave Yi '22 on a set of t-shirts and stickers. She encourages other student artists who are interested in having their art featured on apparel and other products to reach out to her.

"It was cool getting to work with Dave and seeing his designs come to life on t-shirts and stickers that students are wearing around campus. It is inspiring to showcase different student artwork around campus in a creative way like on apparel," said Zarle.

While Zarle currently has no projects in the works, she hopes to drop at least one to two more launches before she graduates next semester. She is also unsure what will happen to The Roll Collab once she graduates, but she has some ideas on how to continue its legacy.

"My parents thought [The Roll Collab] was such a cool idea and said 'you should definitely pass it down to someone!' Since I'm on a team, I think I could find someone who might want to do it, or I can post a listing for my position on the Instagram page. However, it does take a lot of time, so whoever fills my shoes has to be committed to it," said Zarle.

Regardless of the future of The Roll Collab, Zarle is thankful for the opportunities that the brand has given her. "The Roll Collab definitely taught me to appreciate the creativity of my classmates and the general student body here at Hamilton… If I had one message to share with [the community], it would be to listen to Hamilton's mantra of 'do what you love' and take advantage of the resources on campus. Whether that be physical resources or your professors and classmates, you can really learn so much which I am very grateful for. The creativity here is unmatched and showcasing it through apparel design has been really rewarding, exciting and memorable for me as I wrap up my time here at Hamilton," said Zarle.

PHOTO BY THE ROLL COLLAB

PHOTO BY THE ROLL COLLAB

PHOTO BY THE ROLL COLLAB

Bachelor

Nick Cackett '24

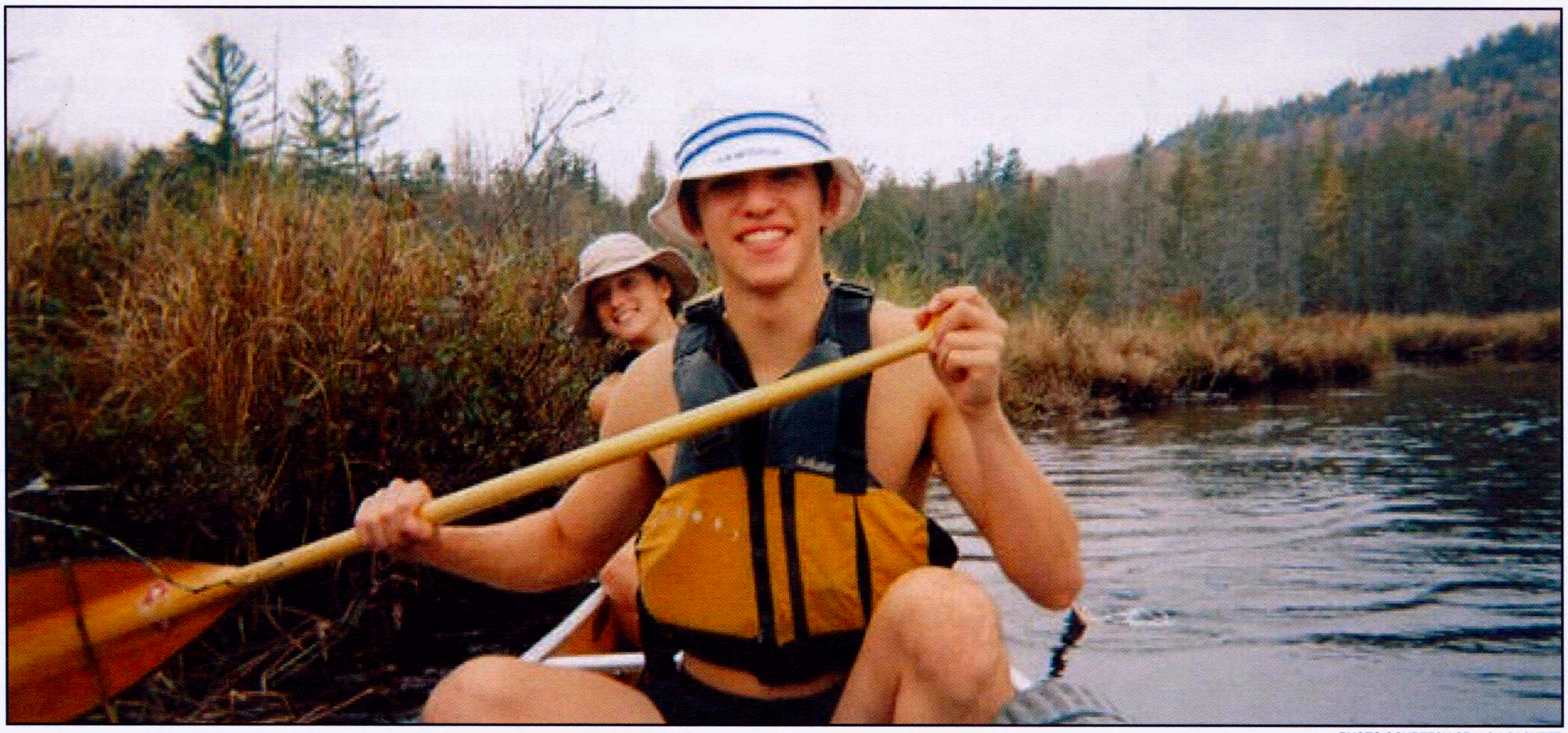

PHOTO COURTESY OF NICK CACKETT

Hometown: Parkland, FL
Home on Campus: South 201
Major: World Politics
Turn on? Girls who are into the Oxford comma.
Turn off? Girls who don't follow sauce-god-21 on soundcloud.
If you were a dorm, which would you be and why? Rogers Estate because I am emotionally distant.
If you had to describe yourself as the love child of any two musicians, who would you pick and why? Dua Lipa with DaBaby.
What advertising slogan best describes your life? Home of the Whopper.
What's the best pick-up line you've ever used/had used on you? Ayo, you're looking thicker than a slice of Mcewen pizza right now.
What's your type? You.
If you were any social space, what would it be? Bab Pav, once popular but fell off.
Where do you go when you want to be alone? Bab Pav.
If you could join one group on campus, what would it be? Rugby.
What's your Patronus and why? Teddy Slosberg aka Slauce Dog aka froggy, because he's a different animal.
If you could break one rule at Hamilton and get away with it, which would you choose? Taking your mask off at the gym.
What would you give a thumbs up? CAB merch drops.
What would you give a thumbs down? Vanilla Soy Milk.
Who would you say is your campus crush? Our loyal Spec readers.
Who would you say is your faculty crush? Dave Thompson.
What would your perfect date be? Candlelit dinner at Commons followed by a Groad sunset.
What is the weirdest thing currently in your room? Kuck.
If you could remake the points system, what would be the number one offense? Vineyard Vines/Canada Goose with the Bean boots- 12 points.
Lights on or lights off? Red LED lights.
Favorite campus study spot? Opus.
What's the last lie you told? See thumbs down question.
What was your first thought this morning? 8:30's are the bane of my existence.
What's the meaning of life? 42.
Which member of Disney royalty are you? The frog from Princess and the Frog.
Which American historical figure are you attracted to and why? Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, because they're cool.

December 9, 2021

The best coffee to get on campus

by **Aliana Potter '24**
STAFF WRITER

Hamilton students reeled this past spring at the news that the beloved Café Opus would not reopen this fall. Several months later, that devastating news was followed by the much quieter departure of Euphoria, the second on-campus cafe. Now, Hamilton boasts two new on-campus cafés—The Toast and FoJo Beans—as well as coffee options in McEwen and Commons. Caffeinated beverages are a staple for almost any college student staying up to study long into the night, so the quality, availability and price of a cup of joe is of utmost importance. McEwen and Commons provide little to no competition when put up against the on-campus cafés, as all they offer is hot coffee.

McEwen offers a much wider selection of flavors compared to Commons, including Irish cream, mocha java, raspberry and pumpkin spice, although their presence is unpredictable. This gives them an edge over Commons which typically only serves original blend coffee and decaf. However, both McEwen and Commons have a starting edge over the The Toast and FoJo, as their coffee is covered on Hamilton dining plans and consequently does not cost a single additional penny. (My personal favorite drink from Commons is to mix the original blend coffee with the hot chocolate for a tasty mocha).

Toast, the next step up from McEwen, serves both iced and hot

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

Students getting their coffee in McEwen Dining Hall.

coffee. They do not offer as many flavors as McEwen, but their lack of offerings in this department is more than made up for by the iced coffee they provide. Students have rumored that The Toast is bound by FoJo's contract to not serve any form of espresso, which puts them at a disadvantage. However, what they lack in lattes and cappuccinos, they make up for in delicious pastries. My personal favorite is the chocolate croissant, but their macaroons and breakfast sandwiches have also found renown on campus. The Toast is open for brunch on the weekend, a feature much reminiscent of the old campus favorite of Opus's Sunday brunch. In the past they have served soup, paninis and other delicious creations, all a great addition to their usual menu; this selection rotates daily, but their quality is consistent. Toast also boasts very low prices: their iced coffee is under $3, which has been a hit amongst penny-pinching college students. Toast's one flaw is their limited coffee menu; although their hot and cold coffee are delicious, their Cazenovia location serves a much wider variety of caffeinated beverages that our campus has not had the opportunity to indulge. Hopefully, they will rotate those drinks in at some point in the coming months.

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

The Toast, one of the privately-owned cafes on campus.

Finally, the winner of best on-campus coffee is FoJo Beans. FoJo serves up a delectable menu of coffee, unique espresso drinks, tasty homemade treats, sandwiches and soup. Their classic drink is the Icy Alex, a traditional cold-brew coffee with a unique twist that keeps students coming back for more. Cold-brew, among many of FoJo's other coffee and tea beverages, is unavailable anywhere else on campus, giving them a monopoly on many of Hamilton's most coveted drinks. Their gourmet grilled cheeses are also a hit, especially the Pineapple Brie, another dish that echos back to the times of Opus and mango brie. While FoJo's prices are significantly higher than other on-campus options, their food and beverages are well worth the increased cost. They also boast two locations, giving them a leg up in terms of

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

One of the two on-campus locations of FoJo Beans.

convenience—you can grab a coffee whether you are a STEM student holed up in the Taylor Science Center (SCCT) or an Econ kid finishing up class in the Kirner-Johnson Building (KJ). FoJo South was lucky enough to maintain the comfy seating previously associated with Opus, a major plus for students. It is easy to sink into the vintage looking couches and enjoy a warm cup of FoJo hot chocolate. To any new FoJo customer looking to uncover their future go-to order, I would recommend the salted caramel iced latte. It is much richer than other lattes, but has a bittersweet tang from the caramel flavoring. Truth be told, though, you truly cannot go wrong with any of the menu items. My one wish for the new caféd is the return of Opus' beloved 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. hours, a necessity for any late-night studier!

December 9, 2021

On the recent season of election losses: are the Dems truly in disarray?

by Stella Karron '23
OPINION EDITOR

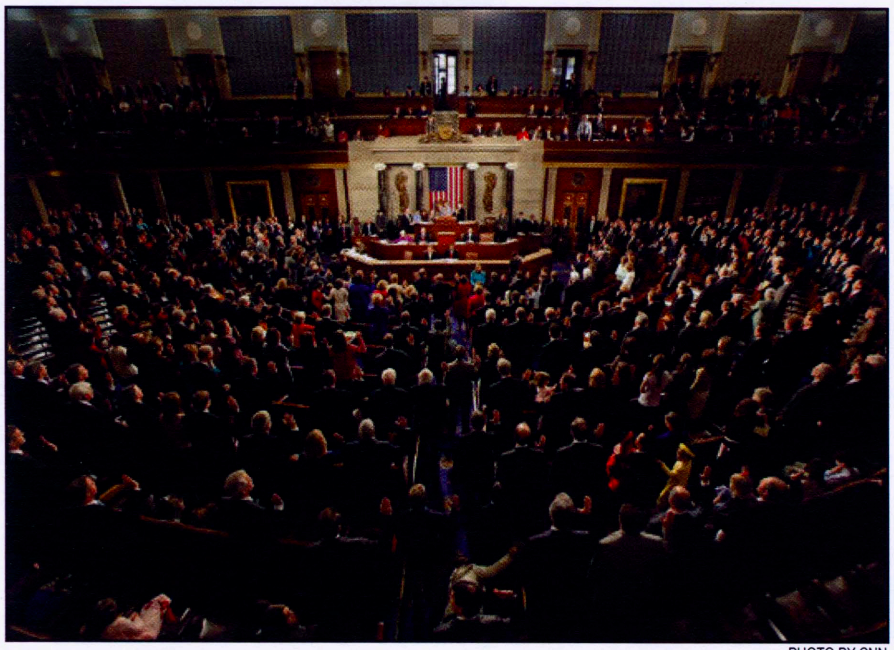

PHOTO BY CNN

The incresingly polarized House of Representatives.

On Nov. 2, one year after losing the congressional election to Claudia Tenney, Anthony Brindisi ran for a seat on the New York State Supreme Court. The seat in question was the 5th Judicial District of New York, representing the counties of Onondaga, Oswego, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida and Herkimer. During the race, Brindisi found himself once again running a tight race–this time against the Republican candidate Danielle Fogel.

Brindisi ended up losing the election by roughly 20,000 votes. While one could blame this recent loss on flaws in the ways Brindisi campaigns, Fogel's win actually illustrates a larger pattern of Republicans gaining seats previously controlled by Democrats. In the 2020 election, despite Joe Biden's victory, Democrats lost 12 seats in the House of Representatives as Republican voters, fueled by energy of the Trump presidency, flocked to the polls. Democrats lost numerous close elections in blue and purple color districts, elections they had previously won or were previously competitive. This result can be boiled down a few factors.

First, since the Trump presidency, polarization between the Democratic and Republican parties skyrocketed. As seen during the voting for Biden's infrastructure bill, it has become increasingly more difficult for the two parties to work together.

This split materializes not only between the two parties but also within the Democratic party itself. There is now considerable polarization within the Democratic party between the moderates and the far left, who presented themselves as the new face of their party. While many noteworthy Democratic representatives on the far left (e.g. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez) gained a substantial following, they have also left those who do not agree with their more left-wing views behind. As a result, these moderate voters, who feel that their voices are no longer being represented by the new Democratic party, are voting for Republican candidates.

Democrats have become victims of their own complacency. Over time, Democratic voters have assumed that if they won an election a few years ago, they would easily carry the race again. Many lack motivation to go to the polls because they feel their votes would have no bearing on the race—after all, the election appears to many of them to be in the bag.

When discussing his recent loss, Brindisi referenced this lack of drive on the part of the voters, stating that "[t]here was a lot of Democratic apathy and energy on the Republican side." Republican voters are simply more motivated to vote, especially after the Trump presidency, when they saw how their motivation could easily translate to a dramatic shift in a country's politics. The far right's distrust of and hatred towards mainstream politicians has always existed, but it gained significant traction in the Trump years, and its momentum has only increased since.

Yet another factor in this shift of voters from the Democratic to the Republican party can be illustrated in the campaign strategies of recent Democratic candidates. Many candidates campaigned on general, blanket statements that offered little by way of specifics other than being unconditionally oppositional to the former Trump administration. In theory, this is a good way of rallying the Democrats, as the vast majority of Democrats lack any sort of appetite for more of Trump. However, this strategy failed to draw out the moderate vote, the precise voters that Democratic candidates need to win over in the next round of elections.

These voters want to know what the candidates will do about local issues—issues that matter to them within their own counties and neighborhoods. They care comparatively little for tally marks on the Democrat vs. Republican scoreboard, or for evidence provided by Democrats as to why our country is in better shape after Trump's defeat and the dawn of the Biden administration. National issues are important, as is reminding voters of Trump's pervasive, negative influence on the country, but these tactics simply do not get moderate locals to the polls. In the next round of elections, if they want to win, Democrats need to shake up their strategy severely. Electoral success does not lie with the party's current methods and messaging, which polarize, demotivate and alienate its own voters. Rather, they ought to take no races for granted and pay more attention to the local issues which keep moderates up at night.

The Spectator Longform Investigative Section

will be looking for passionate and dedicated writers to join our section. The team takes an in-depth approach to many issues on campus, with the goal of producing high-quality, insightful and comprehensive articles. If interested, be on the lookout for an application sent to your email!

*For any specific questions about the section or about articles the section covers, please reach out to **dkfreeman@hamilton.edu** or **awolff@hamilton.edu.***

December 9, 2021

SDA and student dance groups perform for the Fall 2021 showcase

by Rebecca Pomerantz '24
STAFF WRITER

Hamilton College's Student Dance Alliance hosted the Fall 2021 Student Choreography Show, showcasing performances from different dance groups, including Trop Sol, Tap That!, HEAT, Dance Team and Advanced Tap on Saturday, Dec. 4 at 2:00 p.m. The performance took place in the Blood Fitness Center Dance Studio with a live audience, as well as a Zoom link for family and friends watching at home.

Professor Jeff Larson and the Theater Department set up small lights next to the stage wings and allowed each dance captain to choose a color combination to go with their performance. They lit the audience and darkened the stage so that the disco lights would shine effectively on the dancers.

The studio bleachers barely fit everyone, so the audience got creative with seating, filling the staircase leading to the studio and sitting on the floor in front of the bleachers.

The showcase was separated by a ten-minute intermission, in which audience members stretched, used the bathroom and congratulated their friends who performed. To free up space backstage, dancers who only performed in one half of the show sat in the wings for the other. Though they were located in different spots, these dancers maintained the audience's energy offstage, cheering for the new performers while helping others get ready to perform.

Socks and tights flew in the air as dancers did quick changes in the wings; their peers shielded them from public view and provided a little privacy. The difficult pirouettes, precise leaps and complex tap sounds captivated the audience, as dancers could hear murmurings of shock and disbelief among the crowd during performances.

A few of the groups' performances, including Student Dance Alliance's Executive Board's rendition of *Chicago's* "Cell Block Tango" and their finale of "Feeling Good," used props like chairs and the bar. The first performance mimicked the choreography of *Chicago*, with each dancer playing a different criminal in prison.

They danced in and around the chairs, acting out their murder scenes in an artistic, brilliant way. Their second performance of "Feeling Good" was more of a repeat of the SDA showcase last year, but they wanted a chance to perform it in person. Though many audience members had seen this performance from the previous showcase, it was still incredibly well received.

Trop Sol is a Latin, partner dance group that performed three numbers, JR's "Otro te Besa," a bachata remix of Dua Lipa's "New Rules"and "You're the One that I Want," the iconic concluding number from the hit musical *Grease*.

The salsa leads played the T-Birds, while the salsa follows played the Pink Ladies, the two groups stood on opposite sides of the dance floor at first, acting out their roles. Then, they partnered up and performed the intricate salsa choreography filled with many lifts and dips. The bachata remix of "New Rules," in contrast, consisted of only follows, who danced individually and faced forward, a change from the group's regular partner style.

Tap That!, Hamilton College's Tap Dance group, danced to a song in the musical *Newsies* called "King of New York." Before their actual performance, however, the MCs fittingly welcomed the group as "the kings of upstate New York," a clever play on the song's title.

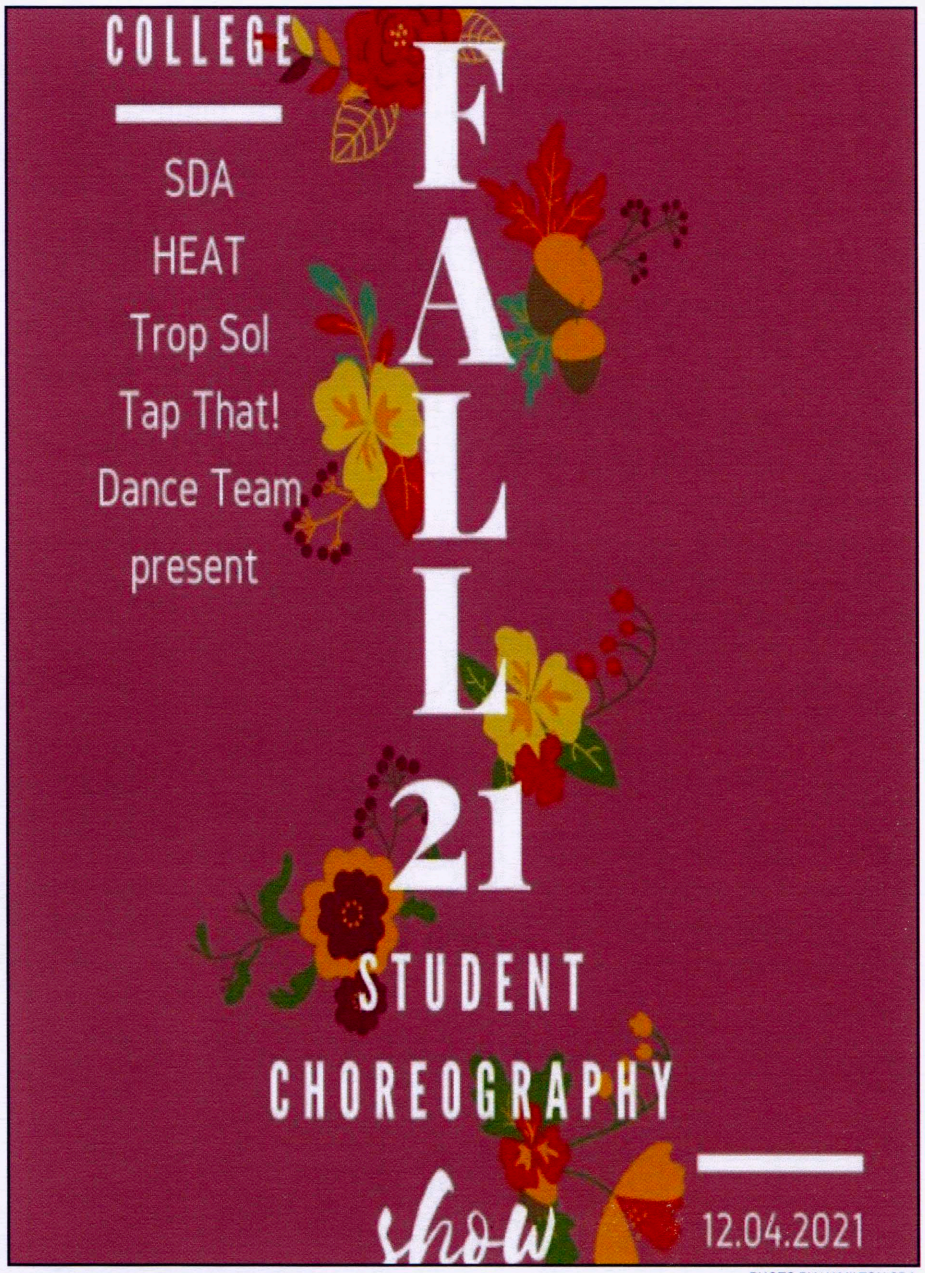

PHOTO BY HAMILTON SDA

The official poster for the Fall semester dance showcase.

All fourteen tap dancers dressed up as different characters from *Newsies*, wearing newsboy caps, flannel shirts and suspenders. Though many members in Tap That! had never tap danced before their first practice early this semester, they still managed to capture every sound in the performance. They switched formations frequently, dancing in a circle and a double V, with everyone squished into the front line for the final pose.

HEAT, Hamilton's hip-hop group, was the group that provided the most performances with complicated and energetic choreos to songs like Doja Cat's "Boss Bitch," Lizzo's "Truth Hurts," Stray Kids' "MIROH" and even a remix of Mozart's "Lacromisa." The group provided individual performances for each dancer's class year to enthusiatic yells, cheers and claps in both the bleachers and the wings, and all HEAT dancers wore black and white shirts emblazoned with the dance group's iconic logo.

By the end of the showcase, the entire crowd erupted into cheers, and all the dancers could see how their hard work, practice and commitment throughout the semester paid off.

F.I.L.M. presents: an overview of John Knecht's filmography and digital art

by Nicholas Cackett '24
STAFF WRITER

On Sunday, Dec. 5, media artist John Knecht presented a selection of his various single and multi-channel works in the Bradford Auditorium, located in the Kirner Johnson building, a part of Hamilton College's F.I.L.M. series.

This was the last presentation of the semester for the series which has continuously provided free and open events related to the art of cinema for students to enjoy throughout the year. The F.I.L.M. series is made possible by the office of the Dean of Faculty and receives support from the Kirkland Endowment, the Art History Department and the Days-Massolo Center with events curated by Director of Cinema and Media Studies Scott MacDonald with the help of Educational Technology Specialist Bret Olsen.

According to his personal website, John Knecht has been a practicing film and video artist since 1973, creating celebrated works of art such as *Deluge: Studies in the Super Natural* (2010) and *Curiosities from the Anthropocene* (2020).

Knecht's projects are rooted in the surreal painting and in the early history of animation. He cites his artistic inspirations to be early, pre-1895 films when cinema was a novel concept and filmmakers were just starting to experiment with the craft. Knecht has an appreciation for the aesthetic of films in the 1930's and 1940's.

Knecht considers himself a visual artist and never uses cameras in his projects, preferring to hand draw his work and relying upon his background as a painter. He thinks of every shot frame by frame, scanning his drawings and putting them into Photoshop where he finishes them and creates a film.

The F.I.L.M. event lasted around one hour and 45 minutes, with Knecht presenting six of his works, each lasting from five to ten minutes. His presented work included, *The Possible Fog of Heaven* (1993), *DELUGE* (2010), *Mr. Baxter's Trip to a Parallel Universe* (2011), *The Mechanics of the Game* (2012), *Grumble Bummer* (2021) and *Curiosities from the Anthropocene* (2020). Knecht stated many of his works deal with the afterlife, a topic that fascinates him deeply. They also touch upon fantasy worlds, where one does not have to worry about logic and can explore.

Knecht began with *The Possible Fog of Heaven*, a film that brought him notoriety, in which Elvis Presley speaks for the first time from the afterlife, describing his experiences in Heaven through a series of voiceovers and graphic texts. As Knecht put it, "The structure of the tape follows the last drug prescriptions Elvis had before he died." He continued by showing *DELUGE*, *Mr. Baxter's Trip to a Parallel Universe* and *The Mechanics of the Game* in quick succession of one another.

These projects built upon his interest to build a fantastical place that viewers can go to. They were all hand drawn with pencil and paper, a process he enjoys because he still thinks of the screen as a piece of paper and gives him greater control over his creation. Knecht finished his presentation with his two latest projects, *Grumble Bummer* and *Curiosities from the Anthropocene*, which explore a future where humanity no longer exists. The latter has been selected for the Athens International Film and Video Festival.

John Knecht's films are hard to characterize, given their diversity and the various themes they explore. They tell stories through nonconventional and experimental means, allowing the viewer to interpret it in their own way. That is not to say that Knecht did not craft his work to explore a particular idea or subject area, and his films often express a theme he is interested in.

As Justin Hern '24, a student that has attended various F.I.L.M. events put it, "I think it's quite interesting to see creators explain their work after we watch it, especially for films that are this abstract and surreal. It provides context and understanding, bridging the gap between our subjective interpretation and the creator's intent."

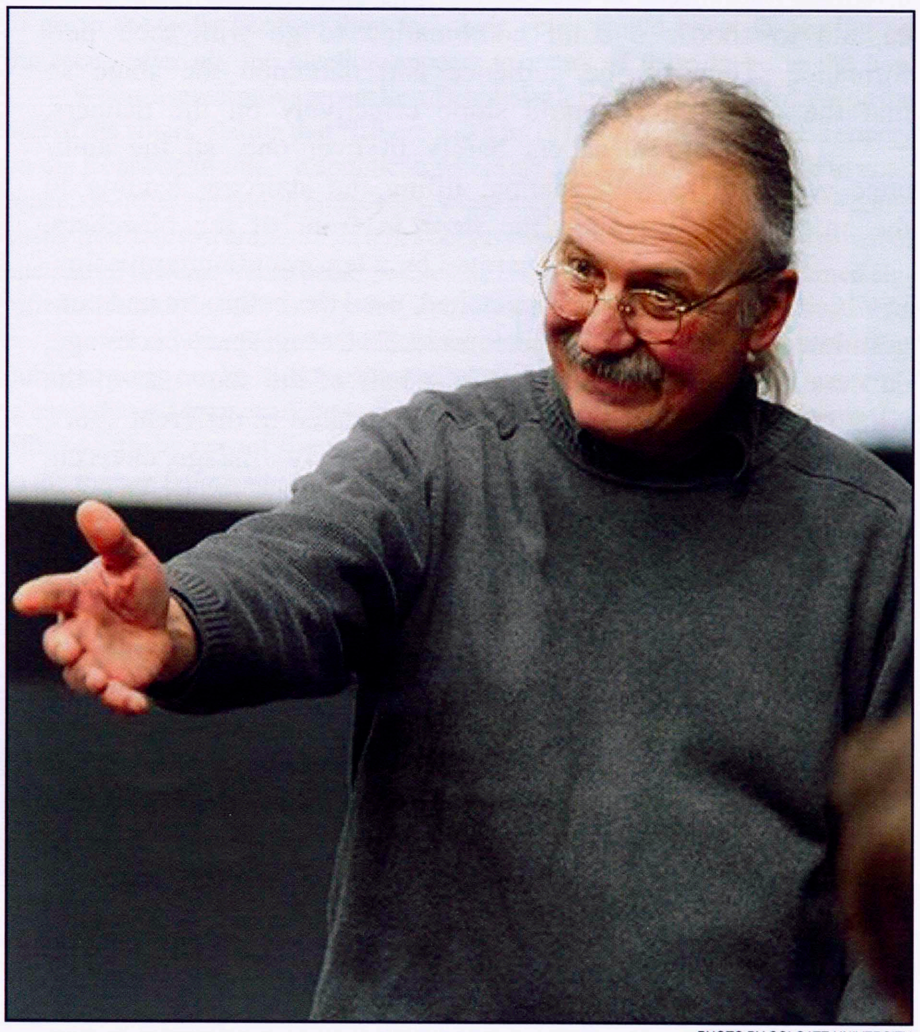

PHOTO BY COLGATE UNIVERSITY

John Knecht giving a film lecture at Colgate University.

PHOTO BYJOHN KNECHT

One of John's Knecht's many paintings presented at the event.

December 9, 2021

Phasmophobia: The Nightmare Update

by Jason Le '23
STAFF WRITER

Ever since Kinetic Games' *Phasmophobia* made its debut almost two years ago, the player count has just been skyrocketing. As a result, fans have been begging for more updates to this ghost investigation game. Rest assured, the developers listened and rolled out numerous updates that continue to make this game a fresh and truly unique kind of horror.

Since the publication of my first review, *Phasmophobia* now has a variety of major additions. For instance, two new maps, Willow Street House and Maple Lodge Campsite released. There are a total of twenty ghosts, one new piece of equipment (D.O.T.S. Projector), various upgrades or texture overhauls to the old equipment, new and terrifying ghost activities and a nightmare mode difficulty.

In the last few updates, Kinetic Games redesigned many of the ghost hunting tools. For instance, video cameras will now reveal ghost orbs in real time and have a night vision mode that makes the flashlight completely obsolete. Other items received new animations and texture overhauls. Crucifixes slowly burn, the Spirit Box has terrifying voices rather than just the one robotic voice and motion sensors finally work, just to name a few.

Finally, the ghost-hunting journal has received a massive texture and technical overhaul. The journal will now illustrate what ghost behaviors the player would need to look for in order to find it, the evidence the player can use to eliminate the ghost-type, as well as the objectives you need to complete in order to maximize your reward.

As aforementioned, the release of a new difficulty mode amplifies the horror to beyond anyone's imagination. Ghost events now play a significant role compared to prior versions of the game. Rather than flicker the lights or throw objects at the player, ghosts can mimic an impending hunt, shatter all the lights in the room, breathe in the player's ears and manifest in front of them.

Ghost events can significantly affect the player's sanity and can increase the chances of a hunt happening fairly quickly. When you hear the ghost cackle or sing, you will want to run.

Ghosts can now wander the halls and change their favorite locations, making it significantly more difficult for the player to detect where and what the ghost is. Additionally, ghosts may hide one piece of evidence, leaving the player to use their wits to figure out what it is. Is it a loud ghost? Does it like to throw items? Will it move faster when it is cooler or hotter in the room? Does the ghost leave footprints? It is all ambiguous and requires good intuition. These new additions to the game add an extra layer of challenge to all the maps. Particularly, these additions make larger maps, such as Asylum or High School, much more daunting to play without a full team.

Hunts have become increasingly more deadly. With escalated difficulty, your sanity will drain exponentially faster. Additionally, ghosts tend to hunt for much longer and will move much faster, making the feeling of being chased significantly more terrifying.

Additionally, the harder the difficulty level, the less hiding spots there are. Closets and particular rooms will be blocked off, forcing the player to hide behind couches and island countertops, or to outrun and loop around the ghost without running into a dead end in order to evade the ghost.

If you are still bored with Among Us or are looking for a new co-op game to play with your friends, *Phasmophobia* is worth picking up. As a game still in early-access, the price is relatively cheap, marked at $13.99 USD.

PHOTO BY GAMESRADAR+

Players encounter a ghost from *Phasmophobia.*

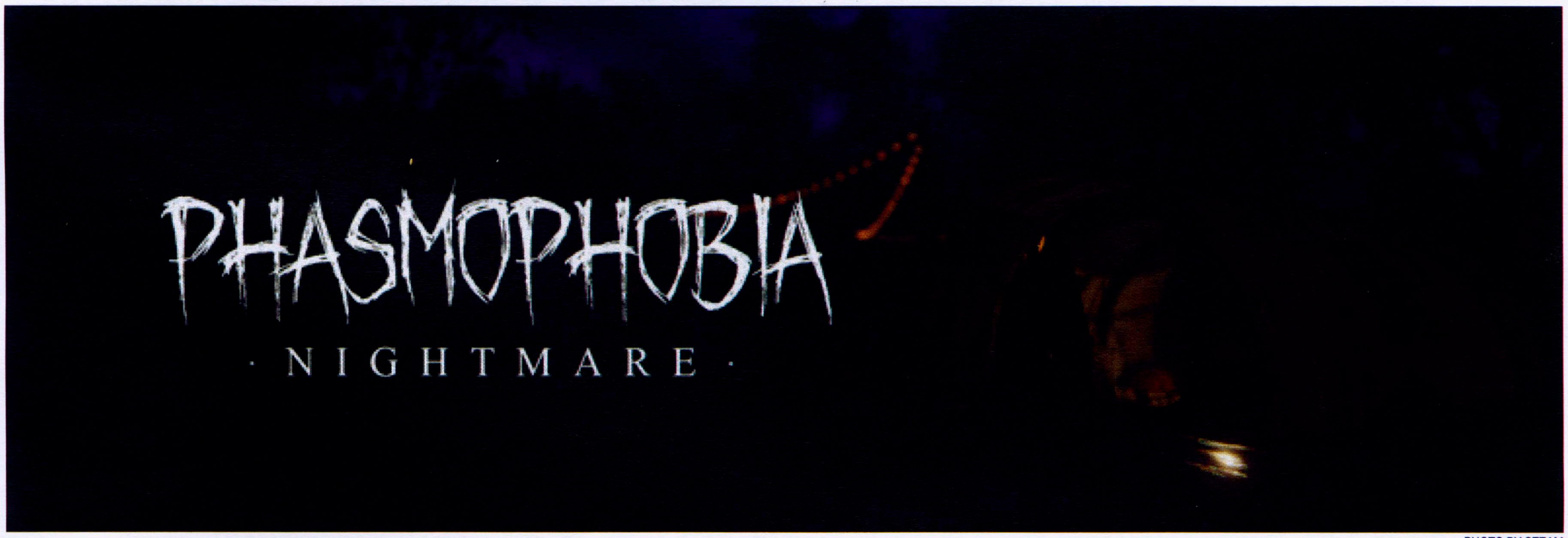

PHOTO BY STEAM

A dilapidated tent is featured on the official cover art for *Phasmophobia: Nightmare.*

PHOTOS BY JOSH MCKEE, POSTER BY KRYSTAL YERNYE

The Spectator Athletes of the Week

by Sam Dils '22
SPORTS EDITOR

With a full week of winter sports competition in the rear-view mirror, *The Spectator* names its Athletes of the Week for the week of Nov. 29 to Dec. 5. Many teams earned important victories over this stretch, adding to an impressive start to the winter season for all teams involved. Here are the best performances from the games and meets.

Men's Basketball: Nick Osarenren '22

Senior forward Nick Osarenren '22 propelled the men's basketball team to a 1-1 week on the court. He was crucial on both the offensive and defensive end against Hartwick, helping the team pull away in the second half. He finished with 14 points and nine rebounds, to go with one block and one steal in an 89-58 victory. Due to an overall cold night from beyond the arc, the team fell in a 69-65 loss at Utica on Dec. 4. Despite not having his best scoring night, Osarenren was still incredibly disruptive on the defensive end, tallying an impressive 15 rebounds, six steals and a block.

Women's Basketball: Kelcie Zarle '22

Senior point guard Kelcie Zarle '22 led the women's basketball team to an impressive 3-0 week, with wins on three consecutive days over the weekend. Zarle started off with a 19-point, six-rebound game in a tight, low-scoring win at home over Hartwick College. She then led the team to back-to-back wins at the Ed Hockenbury Classic at Norwich University, averaging 12.5 points, leading the team in scoring. The team dominated in the two-day event, putting up an impressive defensive effort in a 66-40 win over Wellesley, and then took down Colby-Sawyer in an 81-38 drubbing the next day.

Men's Hockey: Jordi Jefferson '22

The men's hockey team went 1-1 in two NESCAC road games this weekend, earning a crucial win against #10-ranked Trinity and falling in overtime to Wesleyan. Senior winger Jordi Jefferson '22 scored a goal in each of the two games, including the pivotal game-winning, power-play goal against Trinity with just over ten minutes to play in the third period. Jefferson leads the team (3-2) in points with five for the season, and is up to 20 career goals for the Continentals. The team currently sits third in the NESCAC standings, with a game in hand of the two teams above them in points.

Women's Hockey: Mya Berretta '22

The women's hockey team suffered two defeats at Williams this weekend, but earned a crucial point in the NESCAC standings with an overtime loss in the second of the two matchups over the weekend. Senior Mya Berretta '22 factored in the scoring of both games, setting up Nancy Loh '23 for the game-tying goal in saturday's 2-1 overtime loss. Beretta scored herself the previous day in a 4-1 loss, where the team failed to convert its chances despite dramatically outshooting Williams. The team moves to 4-2 on the season.

COURTESY OF JOSH MCKEE

Senior Captain Nick Osarenren '22 lines up a jumper.

COURTESY OF JOSH MCKEE

Sam Karlson '23 leads the women's swiming and diving team to early success.

Men's Squash: Tate Surratt '24

Playing at the top position on the Hamilton ladder, Tate Surratt '24 led the men's squash team to one win and one loss in a home saturday doubleheader. Facing some stiff competition in the Saint Lawrence squad, the team fell 9-0 in its first match of the day. Then, in front of a lively crowd Surrat defeated Wesleyan's Shanay Sanghai 3-0 (11-6, 11-9, 11-7) in a dominant performance to clinch the team win. With a couple of more individual wins, the team put away Wesleyan 7-2, a massive performance against a perennial NESCAC foe.

Women's Squash: Natalie Harrity '23

The women's squash team went 1-1 this weekend, earning a 9-0 victory over Wesleyan, while putting up a strong fight but falling 6-3 against Saint Lawrence. Harrity won both of her matches, including a nail-biting 3-2 (11-8, 11-9, 6-11, 9-11, 12-10) win against Saint Lawrence's Margaret Pruett. Even after the grueling five-gamer, Harrity still found the energy to bring her best against Wesleyan, earning a quick and decisive 3-0 (11-4, 11-8, 11-2) victory for her second of the day out of the #5 position.

Men's Swimming and Diving: Emilio Vicioso '23

Both the men's and women's swimming and diving teams competed at the Division III Connecticut Cup Championships over the weekend. Emilio Vicioso '23 was an essential piece in the team's fourth-place overall finish at the event. Vicisio earned two individual second-place results in both the 50 and 100-yard breaststroke with times of 26.48 and 57.38, respectively. He also swam a leg on the 200 yard medley relay, alongside Ethan Del Rosario '24, Jack Jee '24, and Nick Wilkins '22 which finished second with a time of 1:34.44.

Women's Swimming and Diving: Sam Karlson '23

On the women's side of the Connecticut Cup, the team earned an impressive second place finish out of the eight-team field competing over the weekend. Sam Karlson won two events and moved up the Hamilton record boards, triumphing in both the 50 and 100-yard freestyle. Her time of 24.33 in the 50-free puts her fourth all-time among Hamilton swimmers. Karlson already has the second-best 100-yard freestyle time in program history at 52.15; she nearly repeated that performance, again taking first in the event this weekend with a time of 52.64. Karlson also earned a third-place finish (1:58.12) in the 200-yard freestyle.

December 9, 2021

Favorites: NFL's Most Valuable Player

by Chris Harrison '23
SPORTS CONTRIBUTOR

With the NFL regular season nearing a close, the MVP race is heating up. No player has run away from the rest of the pack as a clear favorite just yet, but there is some exceptional talent this year. Some of the early frontrunners have fallen off due to poor play or injury, making the NFL's most prestigious award up for grabs with only five weeks left in the regular season. With that said, let us take stock of the five players most likely to take home the hardware. These players are my frontrunners through the first 13 weeks, with much subject to change.

1. Tom Brady - Quarterback - Tampa Bay Buccaneers

At age 44 Brady is still playing incredible football, throwing for 3,771 yards and 34 touchdowns against only ten interceptions. Brady puts up these strong stats while leading the Buccaneers to a 9-3 record, leaving the Bucs at the top of the NFC South and a strong contender to nab the one seed going into the playoffs. Brady has weapons on the offensive side of the ball at his disposal, even after the suspension of Antonio Brown, and has the ability to seemingly always find the right target. Not only is Brady a strong MVP candidate, but with Evans, Fournettte, Godwin and Gronk, the team is positioned well for the playoffs. With a favorable schedule to finish out the season, the likelihood Brady continues to put up MVP numbers is high just like his chances of taking home the hardware.

2. Aaron Rodgers - Quarterback - Green Bay Packers

Rodgers' play has not dropped off after an MVP campaign last season. While the Packers' star's numbers are not quite as prolific, he is a real threat to be the first player to win back-to-back MVPs since Peyton Manning in the 2008 and 2009 regular seasons. This season, Rodgers racked up 2,878 yards passing with 23 touchdowns on only four interceptions so far. Despite missing one game after testing positive for COVID-19 this year, Rodgers' generally stellar play through the rest of the season keeps him in the thick of the race.

3. Kyler Murray - Quarterback - Arizona Cardinals

Murray looked like the favorite for the award until missing the entire month of Nov. due to injury. Still, his exceptional play throughout the season keeps him in the running if he has a great finish to the year and the 10-2 Cardinals remain at the top of the NFC. Murray currently has 2,399 passing yards, 19 touchdowns and seven interceptions as well as 206 yards and five touchdowns on the ground. These stats would be impressive if Kyler had played the whole season, let alone after missing threegames. Even with the missed time, Murray still has a good shot at his first ever MVP if he finished the season strong.

COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

Tom Brady is having a fantastic season, making him an MVP frontrunner.

COURTESY OF DRAFTKINGS

Jonathan Taylor of the Indianapolis Colts celebrates.

4. Jonathan Taylor - Running Back - Indianapolis Colts

The only running back on my list is Jonathan Taylor, who burst into the conversation with a historic game against the Buffalo Bills in week 11. Taylor finished that game with 204 total yards and five touchdowns and has not looked back since. Right now he has 1,648 all purpose yards and 18 touchdowns and has the Colts at 7-6 and in the thick of the playoff race. If Taylor can keep his hot streak going to finish the season, he has an opportunity to become the first running back to win an MVP since Adrian Peterson in 2012.

5. Lamar Jackson - Quarterback - Baltimore Ravens

The best dual threat quarterback in the league, Jackson has piloted the Ravens to an 8-4 record behind 2,865 yards passing, 16 touchdowns and 13 interceptions to go along with 762 yards and two touchdowns rushing. While his interception totals are high, Jackson has still been effective through the air and keeps the Ravens in contention for the AFC's number one seed. If Jackson can keep winning games and cut down the turnovers, he is a candidate to steal the award from the other players on this list.

Honorable Mention: Josh Allen - Quarterback - Buffalo Bills

While Allen was an early favorite to win the award, some bad games by both him and his team have pushed him out of my top five. That said, his numbers are up there with the other players on this list so if he can right the ship and win the AFC East title, he still has a chance to win his first MVP this year.